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## News Summary

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**Fusion in a flask** may never have occurred, physicists said at a meeting last week. Page A4.

**Walker Percy,** the novelist, physician, and this year's Jefferson Lecturer, calls the social and behavioral sciences incoherent. Page A5.

**Some professors assert** that if publishers win their lawsuit against a photocopying chain, it will be impossible to educate students. Page A11.

**College officials fear** that charges of improprieties by the heads of two state student-loan agencies will tarnish student-aid's image. Page A18.

**Gov. Mario M. Cuomo vetoed** a plan to raise tuition at New York's public-university systems. Page A19.

**Missouri's college officials** are confounded by the state's unwillingness to increase taxes for education. Page A19.

**More colleges are struggling** to dispose of hazardous wastes generated by campus operations. Page A27.

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# Ruling Seen Helping Professors Bring Discrimination Cases

## Supreme Court puts burden of proof on employers

By SCOTT JASCHIK
WASHINGTON

A ruling by the Supreme Court last week could make it easier for faculty members to bring discrimination cases against colleges and universities over tenure and promotion decisions.

The Court found that in cases where employees provide sufficient evidence that illegal discrimination played a role in the decision, employers seeking to defend themselves must prove by "a preponderance of the evidence" that they would have made the same decision regardless of the discrimination.

Although the case did not involve a faculty member, experts on higher-education law said the circumstances were similar to those cited in discrimination suits brought by faculty members. For that reason, they predicted that the Court's decision would probably change the way in which some of those faculty cases are decided.

### Decisions Made 'on Irrational Bases'

"This is a very important ruling because it helps people to understand that these employment decisions are still being made on irrational bases," said Donna L. Shavlik, director of the American Council on Education's Office of Women in Higher Education. She said the case would be "very positive" for faculty members bringing suits based on discrimination that is subtle, rather than overt. "The unconscious judgments are still there, and they still plague women faculty members, administrators, and students," she said.

The Supreme Court case originated in a

*Continued on Page A22*

**SOUTH KOREA GETS TOUGH ON RADICAL PROTESTERS**

REUTERS/BETTMANN

**The deaths of six policemen in a university raid in Pusan have hardened attitudes toward student radicals. Above, a subsequent clash at Seoul National U.: Page A35.**

# *Black-College Officials Applaud Bush Plan, but Some Say It Ignores Most-Pressing Issues*

By ROBIN WILSON
WASHINGTON

Officials of historically black colleges last week applauded President Bush's new program to marshal support for their institutions.

But civil-rights lobbyists said Mr. Bush's plan ignores the most pressing education issues facing black students: the difficulty in gaining admission to college and, once there, footing the tuition bills.

### Ceremony in Rose Garden

"It is good the federal government is taking these initiatives, but these shouldn't be the only ones," said Phyllis McClure, director of the division of policy and information of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

President Bush announced the program for black colleges at a Rose Garden ceremony. White House officials said the Bush Administration would do the following:

- Strengthen an executive order, originally signed by President Reagan, directing federal agencies to award more grant and contract money to black institutions.
- Create the President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The board members, who will be appointed by the President, will include college presidents, business leaders, and elementary- and secondary-school officials. The board will help Education Secretary Lauro F. Cavazos monitor federal agencies' commitments to black colleges and give the Secretary advice on other ways in which black colleges could be strengthened.
- Work with businesses to encourage private support of black colleges. The White House Office of National Service will ask businesses to offer matching grants to colleges and to help them develop more effective ways to manage their finances, strengthen their faculties, and improve course offerings.
- Develop a new program that will allow more students at black colleges to serve in part-time and summer jobs in the federal government. The Administration also will

*Continued on Page A23*

# *Computerization Makes Student Records Accessible, but Raises Issues of Security and Confidentiality*

By THOMAS J. DeLOUGHRY
CHICAGO

The computerization of students' records is making information more accessible to administrators, faculty members, and the students themselves. But it is also raising new concerns about security and confidentiality.

People assembled here for a meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers heard speakers at several sessions call on all university offices with access to student records to guard their privacy and protect them from unauthorized use.

Nationwide, more and more faculty members and administrators are seeking access to students' files, said Thomas M. Luker, a systems analyst with the registrar's office at the University of Texas at Austin. He said professors and administrators want instant access to class rosters or to information about students they are advising. The proliferation of computer terminals has also spurred demand, by giving more staff and faculty members the means of gaining access to records systems.

Peggy Corley Askins, registrar at Oklahoma Baptist University, said computers had brought an end to the days when registrars had sole responsibility for the privacy of student files and full control over them.

"With electronic records, your level of responsibility is far higher than your level of control," Ms. Askins told the registrars. An institutional approach to the security of records is "absolutely essential," she said.

Faculty and staff members must become familiar with security procedures that are now common in registrars' offices, she said, noting that people should keep pass-

*Continued on Page A32*

**Long Fight Between TIAA-CREF and Critics May Be Nearing End**

Colleges are awaiting a ruling on a plan to give TIAA-CREF's 1.2 million policyholders more control over their retirement money: Page A11.

## MARGINALIA

From the announcement of a logo-design contest at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee:

"Next year the U.W.M. School of Architecture and Urban Planning will be celebrating its 20th anniversary. . . .

"Even though the logo-design will be primarily used for t-shirts and sweatshirts, consider the use of it on mugs, buttons, and bumber stickers."

Not to mention bumber*shoots*.

■

For a "Touch of Home Week," the manager of the University of Indianapolis cafeteria asked students to give him their favorite recipes. Among the 220-plus that he received were recipes with the following titles:

"Pink Stuff"

"Dirt Pudding"

"Grandma Johnson's Porcupines"

"Spanish Woo Woo"

■

Job opening in *Family News*, a publication from the office of the dean of students at Denver Seminary:

"CHAPLIN Part-time, to work with hospice patients."

Charlie, where are you?

■

News item in the Bethlehem (Pa.) *Globe-Times*:

"Don Davis of Bethlehem, a math professor at Lehigh University, finished in third place Sunday in the Sri Chinmoy 50-mile run. . . .

"Davis, 43, finished the course in six minutes, 30 seconds."

That's life in the fast lane.

■

Which brings us to an item in our own "In the Statehouses" column:

"Six presidents of religious colleges in Iowa landed in the middle of a bitter fight over legislation to legalize riverboat gambling. . . .

"John V. Hartung, president of the Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, said the college presidents 'didn't even know they were getting involved. They were trapped.'

"Mr. Hartung said the presidents thought they were engaged in a casual conservation about a provision in the proposed law which would allow 18-year-olds to gamble."

Beware of casual conservatives, a reader warns us.

■

From a memorandum from fraternities to the Steering Committee and Task Force at Gettysburg College, which is looking into Greek life on the campus:

"First of all it is apparant that greek affiliation improves academic performance as evidenced by the higher grade point averages greeks mainatin over non-Greeks."

Uh-huh. —C.G.

# In Brief

## Protesters Disrupt Speech by South African Official

A representative of the South African government was forced to flee Temple University after protesting students interrupted a speech he was giving.

John A. Davies, the South African consul, had been invited to speak by the chairman of the political science department.

As he began his speech, Mr. Davies was interrupted by chanting students. Mr. Davies decided to leave, but angry student demonstrators blocked his way and prevented him from leaving for 20 minutes.

Peter J. Liacouras, president of Temple, said that while he condemned the apartheid policies of the South African government, he also condemned the protesters for denying Mr. Davies his right to free speech.

## Asians on U.S. Campuses Rally to Support Chinese

Asians studying at American colleges and universities held rallies last week in support of students in China who are demonstrating for democratic reforms.

Organizers said it was one of the largest mobilizations of Asian students on American campuses in recent years.

"We want to reach the public and get the support of the American people," said Ping Chen, a Chinese research fellow at the University of Texas at Austin who was one of the main organizers of the rallies. "It's important for everyone to hear our message."

Mr. Chen, a former president of the Young Chinese Economists Society, an association of Chinese students, said demonstrations were expected on about 50 U.S. campuses.

Tens of thousands of Chinese students have taken to the streets in several Chinese cities in recent weeks, demanding more democracy and freedom (see Page A35).

## MIT Panel Urges Changes in Engineers' Education

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

A faculty commission at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology last week called for major changes in the education of engineers and managers to improve American productivity.

The commission said engineering educators should emphasize "real-world, hands-on experience" and give an international context to more courses.

The recommendations were included in *Made in America: Regaining the Productive Edge*, a hardcover book that describes new strategies in industry, education, labor, and government that commission members said were needed to improve American productivity.

### Role for Business Schools

The 16-member commission recommended that engineering students be given the option of an extended "pre-professional" undergraduate program that would provide them with a broader education in allied technologies, science, economics, history, and management.

The commission did not specify the length of such a program, except that it would be longer than four years.

Business schools, the book said, should strengthen their ties to universities abroad to foster exchanges of ideas, students, and faculty members.

The commission said a major interdisciplinary research center should be established to coordinate research in industrial productivity and to encourage the development of interdisciplinary courses related to industrial productivity.

The book was published by the M.I.T. Press and is available for $17.95 a copy.

—THOMAS J. DeLOUGHRY

## ACT Sees Greater Need for Student Aid

More than 80 per cent of U.S. schoolchildren would need financial aid to attend community college if they enrolled today, according to a report by the American College Testing Program.

Ninety-five per cent of schoolchildren would need financial aid to attend a private college or university, adds the report, "Family Income, Children, and Student Financial Aid."

The report attributes the expected increase in demand for aid to a greater proportion of American families at lower income levels. Single-parent families and those headed by parents who are not college-educated, in particular, have had problems maintaining their standard of living since 1970, the report says.

It predicts that higher education will see more institutionally financed aid programs to make up for inadequate government funds, more plans that encourage families to set aside money for college, and a continued shift in enrollment toward less expensive colleges.

Copies of the report are available free from A.C.T. Publications, P.O. Box 168, Iowa City 52243.

## Cal. Historical Society Closes Its Library

The California Historical Society, a 118-year-old organization whose extensive collection of rare early California documents is used widely by scholars, has closed its library because of financial problems.

Nathan Sumner, executive director of the society, said it had been operating on reserves for many years and had run out of money. Twelve of its 22 employees have been laid off; 10 remain to maintain the collection.

Mr. Sumner said the society hoped to reopen the library as soon as $1-million in donations are obtained and a source of operating funds is established. Until now, the society's chief sources of income have been private donations and membership fees.

The society's offices and library are housed in two historic San Francisco buildings. Its collection includes 50,000 books and hundreds of thousands of pamphlets, diaries, manuscripts, photographs, and other artifacts.

## *A Civilized Sporting Tradition for Neighboring Institutions*

ANNAPOLIS, MD.

Students at St. John's College, a small, liberal-arts institution, have won their annual intercollegiate competition against their formidable neighbors, the midshipmen of the U.S. Naval Academy.

The two were not pitted in the rough-and-tumble of the playing field. Rather, in the British tradition, the Johnnies invited the Middies for a more civilized game of croquet on the college's front lawn.

The 6½-hour match marked the seventh year of the intercollegiate competition, and the fifth win for St. John's. The Johnnies bested the midshipmen in two of three games.

The matches began as a way to bring together the neighboring institutions, which have radically different missions and curricula. Until they took up croquet, the two had not competed in sports since 1941. They sailed in dinghy races then.

The St. John's team captain, George Turner, said both teams were serious about their quest for the "Annapolis Cup."

—COURTNEY LEATHERMAN

MIKE MAJOR/ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL

**A St. John's College player hits a croquet ball as a teammate looks on, during a match with the U.S. Naval Academy.**

## Arizona State Race Brawl Under FBI Investigation

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is investigating alleged civil-rights infractions in fights between blacks and whites on Arizona State University's Fraternity Row one night last month.

Two black students who were arrested after the brawl but never charged said they had been bullied by campus police, according to a university spokesman.

Three white students were arrested and charged with failing to disperse after the early-morning fight, which involved 50 students and attracted 500 onlookers.

The incident sparked several anti-racism protests, including a march by about 600 students and faculty members. In response, the university's president, J. Russell Nelson, agreed to demands that the university take steps intended to make the campus more sensitive to racial issues.

## Graduate Students Strike Over Union at Berkeley

Graduate students at the University of California at Berkeley, who have been seeking collective-bargaining rights for six years, re-

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# Note Book

**Can students stay sober for a week?** When Bruce I. Lazarus challenged his liability class for hotel and restaurant majors to stop drinking, the majority of his students fell off the wagon.

Mr. Lazarus, an assistant professor of hotel and restaurant management at Purdue University, has conducted the experiment for the past four years. This year about 40 per cent of the volunteers made it through the week without any alcohol. The best results came in 1987, when 67 per cent of those who tried stayed sober.

Not every student in the class wants to give up alcohol for a week, but all are required to keep a diary of their experiences in trying to.

"I realize now that drinking is a big part of my social life," wrote one student. "My friends and I seem to plan all our activities around drinking."

Another student wrote: "I accepted his offer to drink. He was too cute to say, 'Just Coke please.' "

During the week, students must record how many times they are offered a drink, their behavior when they are drinking, and the number of times they find themselves in situations where alcohol is present.

"The majority of students are shocked at how much alcohol they consume," says Mr. Lazarus. "They never thought about it because they never had to write it down before. Most students are surprised that they can't give up drinking as easily as they thought they could."

■

**University of Florida students who catch their classmates cheating are being urged to turn them in on a 24-hour "cheating hot line."**

Students on the university's Honor Court set up the hot line two months ago to encourage their classmates to report cheaters.

"Students are usually hesitant to turn other students in," says Irene E. Stevens, assistant dean for student services. "But we thought if students could call in anonymously they would be more willing to provide information."

The hot line has received many calls, some of which are being investigated by the Honor Court.

■

**Community colleges are trying to attract more foreign students by holding college fairs in Japan.**

"Colleges and universities have been much more aggressive about recruiting international students," says Michael E. Paradise, director of the Office of International Services at the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. "Foreign students are familiar with American universities, but not community colleges."

The association sponsored a college fair last month in Tokyo, where 1,000 Japanese students met with representatives from 27 community colleges.

**Students**

# Accounting Educators Plan to Update Curriculum, Debate Tighter Entrance Requirements for CPA's

## Some balk at professional group's call for added study; major firms pledge $4-million for innovations

By JEAN EVANGELAUF

Concern over shrinking enrollment and reports of a decline in the quality of graduates have prompted a national effort to update the accounting curriculum and to increase the licensing requirements for certified public accountants.

"Malaise" best characterizes accounting education today, says the president of the American Accounting Association, which represents educators in the discipline.

"Our present textbooks and pedagogy haven't changed since the 1950's and are quite obsolete," says the president, Gerhard G. Mueller, who is an accounting professor at the University of Washington. "There has developed a huge schism between what's taught in the classroom and what the real world is like."

He adds: "In most colleges, you get the bright bushy-tailed students into the first-year accounting class, and within the first two weeks, they're totally turned off. They think accounting is nothing but number crunching."

### Revisions Planned for CPA Exam

Some groups are working to turn that situation around. Last month, for example, the nation's major accounting firms pledged $4-million for curricular innovation. And the C.P.A. examination, which has long been criticized for driving the curriculum toward rote learning, will probably be revised. Last week the organization that administers the exam recommended significant changes in the grueling 2½-day, 19½-hour test that is required for licensing.

While educators applaud those moves, they have decidedly mixed reactions to the most far-reaching attempt to change the profession: a ruling by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants that, beginning in 2000, new members must have 150 credit hours of higher education, including a bachelor's degree. For the typical student, that translates into a year of education beyond the baccalaureate.

Because public accountants are licensed by the individual states, the institute has stepped up a campaign to encourage legislatures to require those taking the C.P.A. exam to meet the 150-hour rule. So far six states have adopted it—Florida, Hawaii, Montana, Tennessee, Utah, and West Virginia.

**Gerhard G. Mueller: "In most colleges, you get the bright bushy-tailed students into the first-year accounting class, and in the first two weeks, they're totally turned off."**

If the drive succeeds, it could have a substantial impact on both undergraduate and graduate enrollments and on course offerings, and business schools are watching the effort closely. A session on the requirement at last month's annual meeting of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, for example, drew a standing-room-only crowd.

### Greater Complexity Cited

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants believes the 150-hour requirement is needed because accounting has become more complex, according to Rick Elam, vice-president for education at the institute. "Just look at the leveraged buyouts, junk bonds, and other new wrinkles in the financial world that accountants and auditors are required to make statements about," he says. "It's clear that C.P.A.'s need more education to cope in the world of ever-changing financial instruments and government regulation."

While the institute does not specify which courses or which degrees potential C.P.A.'s should complete, it recommends they have 60 to 80 hours of general education, 35 to 50 hours in business, and 25 to 40 hours in accounting. Mr. Elam says the guidelines are "broad and flexible," and he emphasizes that C.P.A.'s will not have to earn a graduate accounting degree.

Accounting educators are divided over the proposal. Advocates believe that extended training is vital for success in accounting, and they say the requirement will enhance the stature of the profession. Opponents warn that more education does not necessarily mean better education, and they say it may deter people from considering the field. They also fear state legislatures may set inappropriate course requirements.

### Transition Could Be Disruptive

The American Accounting Association says the proposal is but one of many ways to stimulate change and does not endorse it as a "single-track" approach. The Federation of Schools of Accountancy, which represents 36 graduate accounting programs, supports it.

The transition to the new requirements will most likely be disruptive, given the experience of one of the first states to make the switch. In 1979, Florida legislators voted to require that after August 1, 1983, candidates for the C.P.A. exam would have to have a bachelor's degree and 30 additional hours of course work, including 36 hours of accounting beyond the introductory level.

As the effective date neared, students rushed to meet the old requirements, according to Clifford E. Eubanks, dean of business at the University of Central Florida. "We came close to graduating two classes in one year," he recalls.

Statewide, the number of first-time test takers swung dramatically. Before the change, from 1,800 to 2,000 first-time candidates took the exam each year, but in 1983, the number soared to 3,657. It plunged to just 49 the next year and rose only to 741 by 1988.

Listing the effects of the change, Mr. Eubanks says the passing rate of first-time test takers more than doubled, to 34 per cent, and he says he believes the quality of new accountants has improved. But de-

*Continued on Following Page*

# *Education Secretary, Citing Student Statistics, Says School-Reform Movement Is Stalled*

WASHINGTON

Education Secretary Lauro F. Cavazos reported last week that students' performance in the nation's schools had stagnated and was "merely average."

In releasing the Education Department's sixth annual "Wall Chart" of state education statistics, Mr. Cavazos said the major obstacle to improvement was the country's failure to recognize it had an "educational deficit." The education-reform movement, he said, "has lost some of its momentum."

Mr. Cavazos cited a dip in the high-school graduation rate and a mixed performance on college-admissions tests as the primary evidence of the problem. Nationally, the graduation rate fell to 71.1 per cent in 1987 from 71.6 per cent in 1986. The average score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test fell by two points in 1988, to 904, while the average score on the American College Testing Program A.C.T. Assessment rose a tenth of a point, to 18.8.

### 'We Cannot Be Satisfied'

"We cannot be satisfied with mediocrity, and so it's time to turn things around," he said.

To reverse the declines, Mr. Cavazos called on parents to take a more active role in their children's education by consulting with teachers and by insisting that their children attend class and complete their homework. He also urged states and school districts to identify and announce detailed goals for improving performance.

Specifically, he called for an increase in the graduation rate to at least 90 per cent, a level achieved now in only one state, Minnesota. Noting that some 3,600 children nationwide drop out of the educational system each school day, Mr. Cavazos said, "We cannot afford to let any

*Continued on Following Page*

# *Education Secretary, Citing Statistics, Says School Reforms Have Stalled*

*Continued from Preceding Page*

youngster face a lifetime of low-paying and low-status jobs."

From 1986 to 1987, the high-school graduation rate declined in 31 states, increased in 19 states, and was unchanged in one. The District of Columbia had the worst rate, 55.5 per cent.

Mr. Cavazos said the role of the federal government in school improvement is to bring educational issues to national attention; to highlight exemplary programs; to reward successful schools, teachers, and students; and to reduce bureaucratic red tape.

The Secretary emphasized that "money alone is not the answer to our education deficit," saying that achievement had stalled despite large increases in per-student spending in recent years. From 1982 to 1987, such spending rose 46 per cent, to $3,977.

Amid the generally negative indicators of performance, Mr. Cavazos did point to some promising signs. In the last few years, test scores of minority-group students rose, he said, and more students took the S.A.T., A.C.T., and Advanced Placement tests.

As it has in the past, the Education Department drew fire for using what some critics consider inappropriate measures of performance. The Council of Chief State School Officers said test scores and graduation rates "do not provide a comprehensive picture or a basis for comparison among states."

### 'Scores Can Be Misleading'

Because the scores cover a self-selected sample of college-bound students, they do not represent the performance of all young people, said the College Board, which sponsors the S.A.T. "Scores can be misleading when used to compare or rank states," a board spokesman said.

In addition to performance measures, the chart includes such data as population characteristics, average teacher salaries, student-teacher ratios, and per-student expenditures. It also contains a checklist of such reform measures as minimum-competency testing for graduation.

—JEAN EVANGELAUF

## College Admissions Test Scores by State, 1988

| | Test | Average score | 1-year change | Per cent tested |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alabama | ACT | 18.1 | +0.1 | 54.1% |
| Alaska* | ACT | 18.4 | −0.3 | 36.9% |
| Arizona | ACT | 19.3 | 0.0 | 36.8% |
| Arkansas | ACT | 17.9 | +0.1 | 57.9% |
| California | SAT | 908 | +2.0 | 45.7% |
| Colorado | ACT | 19.7 | −0.2 | 64.0% |
| Connecticut | SAT | 908 | −4.0 | 78.2% |
| Delaware | SAT | 899 | −11.0 | 67.4% |
| D.C. | SAT | 839 | −3.0 | 62.9% |
| Florida | SAT | 890 | −3.0 | 52.7% |
| Georgia | SAT | 848 | +8.0 | 63.4% |
| Hawaii | SAT | 888 | +7.0 | 53.1% |
| Idaho | ACT | 19.3 | +0.3 | 57.2% |
| Illinois | ACT | 18.9 | 0.0 | 65.4% |
| Indiana | SAT | 870 | −4.0 | 58.8% |
| Iowa | ACT | 20.3 | 0.0 | 62.5% |
| Kansas | ACT | 19.1 | −0.2 | 66.3% |
| Kentucky | ACT | 18.2 | −0.1 | 60.5% |
| Louisiana | ACT | 17.1 | +0.2 | 64.6% |
| Maine | SAT | 896 | −3.0 | 59.4% |
| Maryland | SAT | 908 | −6.0 | 61.6% |
| Massachusetts | SAT | 906 | −3.0 | 71.7% |
| Michigan | ACT | 18.8 | 0.0 | 62.6% |
| Minnesota | ACT | 19.9 | −0.3 | 44.3% |
| Mississippi | ACT | 16.2 | −0.1 | 67.5% |
| Missouri | ACT | 19.1 | −0.1 | 57.5% |
| Montana | ACT | 19.9 | 0.0 | 52.0% |
| Nebraska | ACT | 19.8 | 0.0 | 67.0% |
| Nevada | ACT | 19.0 | −0.1 | 44.1% |
| New Hampshire | SAT | 933 | −5.0 | 70.6% |
| New Jersey | SAT | 893 | +1.0 | 71.8% |
| New Mexico | ACT | 18.0 | 0.0 | 55.7% |
| New York | SAT | 889 | −5.0 | 71.7% |
| North Carolina | SAT | 841 | +3.0 | 60.7% |
| North Dakota | ACT | 18.7 | −0.1 | 72.8% |
| Ohio | ACT | 19.3 | 0.0 | 51.5% |
| Oklahoma | ACT | 18.0 | +0.3 | 56.3% |
| Oregon | SAT | 923 | −5.0 | 51.5% |
| Pennsylvania | SAT | 886 | −5.0 | 62.6% |
| Rhode Island | SAT | 900 | +2.0 | 63.8% |
| South Carolina | SAT | 838 | +6.0 | 55.4% |
| South Dakota | ACT | 19.8 | +0.2 | 68.3% |
| Tennessee | ACT | 18.0 | 0.0 | 65.2% |
| Texas | SAT | 879 | +4.0 | 45.6% |
| Utah | ACT | 18.9 | 0.0 | 70.1% |
| Vermont | SAT | 909 | −5.0 | 67.0% |
| Virginia | SAT | 902 | −5.0 | 64.9% |
| Washington† | — | — | — | — |
| West Virginia | ACT | 17.6 | 0.0 | 50.5% |
| Wisconsin | ACT | 20.2 | −0.2 | 50.4% |
| Wyoming | ACT | 19.5 | −0.4 | 61.3% |
| U.S. average | ACT | 18.8 | +0.1 | |
| | SAT | 904 | −2.0 | |

Note: The ACT (American College Testing Program's ACT Assessment) is scored on a scale from 1 to 36. The SAT (the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test) is scored on a scale from 400 to 1,600. For each state one score is given, depending on which test was taken by more students. The table shows the percentage of high-school graduates who took the test, based on 1987 public-school and 1986 private-school enrollment data.

* ACT scores reported for comparison, although a larger percentage of students took the SAT in 1988.

† Washington State administers its own tests.

SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Accounting Educators Plan to Update Curriculum, Debate Tighter CPA Entrance Requirements

*Continued from Preceding Page*

spite strong demand, the number of new C.P.A.'s is lower than it was before, and enrollments in accounting programs have leveled off.

The new push for the 150-hour requirement will help stimulate efforts to improve the accounting curriculum generally, educators say. Although not all accounting majors seek a C.P.A. license, the requirements for public accounting exert a strong influence on course content.

### 'Complete Reorientation'

The drive to reform accounting education started four years ago, when the American Accounting Association issued a report urging a "complete reorientation" of the curriculum.

Echoing those sentiments, the chief executives of the "Big Eight" accounting firms last month said in a report that accounting education should be redesigned to become "interesting, demanding, and relevant." To foster that redesign, they committed $4-million over five years to support innovations in the curriculum and in teaching methods and materials. An A.A.A. committee will distribute the money through competitive grants.

### Rooted in the Liberal Arts

Broadly, the two groups propose a curriculum rooted in the liberal arts that prepares students for lifelong learning in the profession. The curriculum should include case discussions and team projects, they say, and should emphasize communications skills.

The groups also want faculty members to be rewarded for work on curricular materials.

"Our highest priority should be to get away from detailed coverage of accounting standards," says John K. Simmons, a professor of accounting at the University of Florida and president-elect of the A.A.A. Accounting and auditing standards have proliferated, but students should not be expected to memorize them, he says.

Some educators attribute the overemphasis on accounting standards to the C.P.A. examination, which is written by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and administered by the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy. "Because the examination is very concrete and the results are very precise, the accounting textbooks and curriculum are influenced more by the examination than they should be," says Mr. Simmons.

### 'There's a Lot of Stress'

The timing of the exam is another problem, adds William G. Shenkir, dean of the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia. It is given in May and November, and many seniors opt for the May exam.

"That means the senior year gets too focused on what it takes to pass the exam, not on what it takes to get a basic education in accounting," he says. "There's a lot of stress."

The test will probably be revised, and a new version may appear as early as 1992, according to the two groups responsible for it. Among the likely changes: Calculators may be used, essay questions will be graded for writing quality as well as for content, the number of "free-response" questions will be reduced, and the length will be trimmed by 3½ hours. The test dates are unlikely to change anytime soon, though, because contracts for test sites are signed years in advance.

Quickening the pace of reform are a growing imbalance between the supply of accountants and the demand for them and concerns that new accountants are not as talented as they used to be.

Last year, 46,340 bachelor's degrees and 4,910 master's degrees were awarded in accounting, well below the 1984 highs of 53,020 and 6,330 respectively, according to accounting institute statistics.

### 16,000 Openings a Year

While it is difficult to document the decline in quality, the Big Eight firms say they are not as selective as they would like to be in hiring for the 16,000 openings they have each year. In addition, accounting professors say the field is no longer the choice of top students, who are instead flocking to finance and management-information systems, which have more up-to-date curricula and more exciting and lucrative career opportunities.

Accounting professors warn that merely revising the curriculum will not solve the staffing problems of the public-accounting firms. They say that to attract the students they want, the firms must increase salaries and provide more interesting career paths.

Educators and C.P.A.'s agree that the poor image of accounting is in part to blame for the supply problem. More must be done, they say, to dispel the view that accounting is a dreary profession. A C.P.A. license can lead to good jobs not just in accounting firms, they note, but in government and business, as well.

### Video for High-School Students

"People say that the TV show 'L. A. Law' helped law-school enrollments," jokes Mr. Shenkir. "If there was a similar show about accounting, it might be a boon to the profession."

While it won't be on prime-time television, a video aimed at selling accounting careers to high-school students will be released next month by the accounting institute, says Mr. Elam. "We're trying to plant the seed that the accounting profession is a place where bright kids can find happiness."

# *Computerization of Student Records Raises Issues of Security and Confidentiality*

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words secret, log off computers when they are left unattended, and keep computer screens out of students' view.

To prevent unauthorized alterations in student files, Ms. Askins said registrars should require that all changes be documented in detail and that only a few university offices be permitted to update records. Faculty members may review the files of students they are advising and students may see their own records, but neither group should be permitted to alter files, she said.

Offices in which workers are allowed to update records must be particularly careful if they employ students or relatives of students, Ms. Askins said. She recommended printing the records of student employees when they are hired and then setting the papers aside. They can later be compared to the versions in the computer if students are accused of wrongfully altering their files.

Ms. Askins also recommended that administrators conduct "background checks" on job applicants who will be authorized to alter records. "If you're employing someone in a sensitive-data situation, it's worth the wait," she said.

Mr. Luker, of the University of Texas, emphasized that employees represented the greatest threats to the accuracy and secrecy of student records.

### Locks on New Terminals

While much attention has been paid to securing systems against hackers—intruders who enjoy gaining unauthorized access to computers—their threat to student files is minimal because many administrative computers are not accessible by telephone, Mr. Luker said.

At Texas, where 1,000 people in 127 offices are able to view students' records, the university has attempted to guard against improper use by limiting the ability to update records to 60 offices.

Texas has begun installing locks on its new terminals so that they can be used only by people who have keys. The university also disconnects terminals from the central computer when they're not in use, and new terminals are programmed to go blank if 30 seconds have elapsed since a key was pressed.

Paul W. Berwick, assistant registrar at Colorado State University, urged registrars to evaluate critically all requests for electronic access to student records. "The fewer people who have the passwords and control to go into any of these screens, the better off we are," he said.

Faculty members at Colorado State can gain access to student files only if their departments pay computer charges, Mr. Berwick said. But a new student-records system to be installed within two years should provide free access to all professors, he said.

Other conference participants played down the threat to the security of computerized records, reporting that they had no problems even when they made files accessible to students.

David P. Ridenour, associate registrar at Indiana State University, said a system established at the university in 1987 to give students access to their records from two public terminals on the campus had not led to violations of the confidentiality of files.

### 'An Equal Partner'

While the university is concerned about confidentiality and has built safeguards into the system to make sure that students don't look at each other's records, Mr. Ridenour said, such concerns should not overshadow the benefits to the student—and to the registrar—of having records in electronic form. The computer system, he added, has helped registrars improve the accuracy of student files and changed attitudes about responsibility for them.

Students are now expected to check their records and to notify the registrar of any changes that may be necessary, he said. "We have entered an era in which the student is an equal partner in maintaining the integrity of his computer account."